

REMARKS

Claims 7-12 remain in this application. Claims 1-6 were previously canceled. Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Independent claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e), along with dependent claims 8-11, as anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,761,399 to Bargheer et al. Reconsideration is requested. Contrary to the assertion made by the Examiner in section 1 on page 2 of the Office Action, the Bargheer et al. air guiding vanes 40 do not constitute a "grid element" as claim 7 requires. The Bargheer et al. '399 air supply device, moreover, does not include a heating element arranged in an air channel between a blower and an air discharge opening as claim 7 defines; the Bargheer et al. '399 heating element 32 is arranged in the tubular duct 30 between the inlet opening 20 and the fan 44 rather than between the fan 44 and the outlet opening 26. Neither claim 7 as originally presented nor claim 7 as it appears above is anticipated by the Bargheer et al. '399 patent disclosure, and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) is requested. Claims 8-11 depend on claim 7, and withdrawal of the rejection of these claims based on the Bargheer et al. '399 patent is requested as well.

In section 7 on page 3 of the Office Action, claim 12 is rejected as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication 2002/0063451 to Bargheer et al. in view of European Patent Application 0217752 to Del Monte. It is presumed that the Examiner intends to refer to 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rather than 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) in this section. Since claim 12 depends on claims 7 and 11,

moreover, it is also presumed that the Examiner intends to reject claims 7, 11, and 12 rather than only claim 12 in this section. Reconsideration is requested.

The Examiner asserts, in section 8 on page 3 of the Office Action, that the Bargheer et al. '451 document includes a grid element as claim 7 recites. Contrary to this assertion, however, there is nothing to suggest that a grid element as claim 7 requires is arranged, in either duct of the Bargheer et al. '451 duct set 33, 34, between the air outflow opening 46 and the heating element 28. Although the Del Monte device does include a grille in the rearwardly facing headrest opening 6, it does not include a heating element. The Del Monte grille, moreover, is arranged at an air discharge opening rather than inside an air channel between an air discharge opening and a heating element as claim 7 particularly defines. Consequently, it is respectfully submitted that the Bargheer et al. '451 and Del Monte disclosures, considered together, do not suggest an air supply device comprising, in addition to the other elements recited, a grid element as claim 7 particularly recites, and that claim 7 is patentable. Nothing in either the Bargheer et al. '451 disclosure or the Del Monte disclosure, moreover, in any way suggests the variable clear cross section defined by claim 11 or the displaceable grids defined by claim 12, and these claims are patentable separately from claim 7.

Independent claim 7 is further rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a), along with claims 8-12, as unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication 2002/0057006 to Bargheer et al. in view of the Del Monte document. Reconsideration is requested. As the Examiner acknowledges in section 13 on

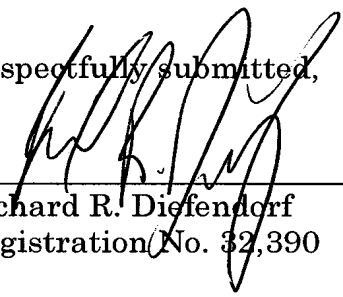
page 4 of the Office Action, the Bargheer et al. '006 document fails to disclose a grid element as claim 7 defines. The Examiner relies on the Del Monte document as a secondary reference for its disclosure of the grille in the rearwardly facing headrest opening 6, but, again, the Del Monte arrangement does not include a heating element, and the Del Monte grille is arranged at an air discharge opening rather than inside an air channel between an air discharge opening and a heating element as claim 7 particularly defines. It is respectfully submitted that the Bargheer et al. '006 and Del Monte disclosures, considered together, do not suggest an air supply device comprising, in addition to the other elements recited, a grid element as claim 7 particularly recites, and that claim 7 is patentable. Claims 8-12 depend on claim 7, and are patentable as well. In addition, once again, nothing in either the Bargheer et al. '006 disclosure or the Del Monte disclosure in any way suggests the variable clear cross section defined by claim 11 or the displaceable grids defined by claim 12, and these claims are patentable separately from claim 7.

This application should now be in allowable condition. If there are any questions regarding this Reply or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an extension of time sufficient to effect a timely response. Please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #095309.56911US).

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Respectfully submitted,



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